

WSDOT Aviation

What We Do

Airports are vital to Washington State, fueling its economy and providing critical links to the state's transportation system. Our mission is to protect and preserve airports while promoting the integration of aviation into the Washington State transportation system. We are charged with advancing the state's aviation interest in four crucial areas: preservation, capacity, safety, and environment.

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WSDOT Aviation Program
Highlights From 2004

Local Airport Aid Grants

Your registration dollars helped to enable—for the first time ever—three rounds of airport aid grants during the biennium. From 2003–2005 WSDOT Aviation was pleased to award more than \$2.8 million in Local Airport Aid Grants to fund over 100 projects at general aviation airports across the state. WSDOT Aviation was also able to use state funds to leverage over \$6.8 million in federal money.



Your pilot and aircraft registration dollars, along with a 10-cent fee on general aviation fuel allows WSDOT to provide an average of over \$1 million a year through state grants to airports in need. Projects include runway paving, lighting, resurfacing, visual aids, crack sealing, and painting.

2003-2005 Biennium Local Airport Aid Grants

	2003	2004	2005
Airports Awarded Grants	29	27	18
Projects	38	41	25
Pavement Projects	\$834,238	\$873,007	\$142,214
Safety Projects	\$400,310	\$31,998	\$183,347
Maintenance, Security & Planning Projects	\$33,246	\$130,823	\$177,016
Total Airport Aid Grants	\$1,267,794	\$1,035,828	\$502,577

Total Airport Aid Grants for
2003-2005 Biennium

\$2,806,199

Search Rescue, Safety and Education

WSDOT’s Search and Rescue (SAR) program saw increased interagency coordination in 2004 that led to a decrease in Emergency Locator Transmitter (ELT) responses, contributing to a 56 percent gain in efficiency. Successful SAR missions were conducted with the invaluable support of Washington Air Search and Rescue and Civil Air Patrol volunteers. Due to popular demand, WSDOT also released an updated version of its Pilots Guide to Washington Airports. Responding to feedback from Washington pilots, WSDOT Aviation updated the web version of the Pilot’s Guide to include more user-friendly search and print capabilities.

Next time you register as a Washington State pilot, remember that \$8 goes directly to support Air Search and Rescue, Safety and Education. When an aircraft goes missing, WSDOT Aviation coordinates the air search and rescue mission with help from hundreds of dedicated volunteers.

Aviation Planning

In 2004, WSDOT Aviation began updating the Washington Aviation System Plan by forming a System Plan Working Group, comprised of regional/metropolitan transportation planning organizations, aviation interests, and local elected officials. Meeting twice in 2004, the group was charged with identifying an airport classification process and airport system gaps, as well as existing and potential roles of airports throughout the state. The information will be used not only for the 2005 Aviation System Plan update, but also for the Washington Transportation Plan, which determines funding.

Aviation Planning Continued

Requests for technical assistance and research materials were on the rise in 2004 from city and county jurisdictions wanting information on the Aviation Land Use Compatibility Program. WSDOT Aviation worked with several cities and counties including Clallam, Pierce, Snohomish, Thurston, San Juan, Stevens, and Whatcom to update comprehensive plans and development regulations to comply with the requirement to protect airports from adjacent incompatible development.



Through aviation planning efforts, WSDOT Aviation identifies the needs and characteristics of Washington airports. This effort includes forecasting, economic analyses, pavement management, land use compatibility, capacity needs, navigation improvements, and capital needs.

State Airports

Stehekin State Airport received a new irrigation system in 2004, thanks to the diligence and dedication of many volunteers. WSDOT Aviation also raised the bar for state airport maintenance. While some state-operated airports received picnic tables and improved campgrounds, others received much-needed weeding, tree trimming/removal, and other up-keep services. All state-operated airports received new signs to improve safety and usability. Additionally, all state-operated airports saw a marked increase in recreation use.

State-operated airports also played a vital role in emergency operations and battling the summer blazes of 2004:

- Eight were used for fighting forest fires; two were used for over 60 days.
- Seven were used for medical evacuation flights.
- Airlift Northwest used Skykomish State Airport 200 times.
- Three were used for military training.
- Five were used regularly by flight schools for training.



WSDOT provides funding for maintenance and improvements to the 16 state-operated airports, which are used primarily for emergency purposes.